

REMARKS

Applicant has considered all points made by the examining attorney in the Office Action and has responded to same in order to ensure compliance with the applicable rules.

1. Allowable Matter.

The examining attorney has determined that claims 13 – 17 are allowable over the prior art of record.

The examining attorney has further determined that claims 8 and 11 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has so rewritten these claims, without prejudice, by amendment above.

As the amendments above result in only three (3) independent claims and fewer than twenty (20) total claims, no additional fees are required.

The Applicant thanks the examining attorney for the allowed claims.

2. 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and 103(a) rejections.

The examining attorney rejected claims 1, 3-7, 12, 18-24, and 26 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,325,280 to Hardy. The examining attorney also rejected claims 2 and 9 as being unpatentable over Hardy in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,365,812 to McGill; claim 10 as being unpatentable over Hardy in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,364,976 to Fletemier et al; and claim 25 as being unpatentable over Hardy in view of Japanese Patent No. JP9109346 to Miura. Each of these claims has been canceled, without prejudice, by amendment above.

3. Drawings.

The examining attorney objected to the original drawings because numeral 54 was not in the drawings. A replacement drawing to resolve this problem is attached hereto.

4. Specification – Written Description.

The Examiner noted two objections due to various informalities within the written description. Each objection to the written description has been corrected with the amendments included herewith.

CONCLUSION

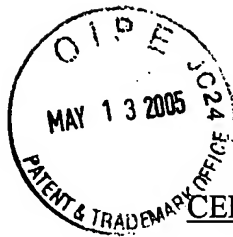
The Applicants request a telephone call if there are any problems associated with this Response, as this Response is believed to put the case in condition for allowance.

At this time and in view of Applicants' amendments and arguments set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are allowable, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
JACKSON WALKER L.L.P.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Chapman', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this paper (along with any paper referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited on the date shown below with the United States Postal Service in an envelope addressed to the "Mail Stop Response- No Fee, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450", as follows:

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